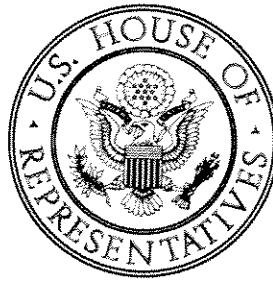


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## CONGRESSMAN KENDRICK B. MEEK

May 28, 2004

President George W. Bush  
The White House  
1600 Pennsylvania Avenue, NW  
Washington, DC 20500

Dear President Bush:

I write today to bring your attention to the dire conditions in Haiti and the Dominican Republic, and urge you to both keep American troops stationed in Haiti until the humanitarian crisis lessens and provide additional emergency funding.

Already the poorest country in the Western Hemisphere, Haiti recently underwent a political crisis and is now sadly, further crippled by these catastrophic floods. As of this morning, the death count by some estimates reached as high as 1,660. Death tolls in the Dominican Republic were confirmed at more than 300. It is certain that the entire island of Hispaniola will require concerted humanitarian relief.

This Tuesday, American troops are scheduled to leave Haiti. As you know, the presence of American troops during times of crisis provide not only logistical support, but also a sense of security. When Hurricane Andrew struck South Florida, American troops were sent to assist in the relief efforts. The calming affect of their presence is undeniable. The same holds especially true in the remote parts of Haiti hit by the flood. If those in the most advanced country in the world needed order after a natural disaster, it is not unreasonable for Haitians to also require that same order. American troop presence in Haiti is needed now more than ever. I ask that rather than withdrawing them on Tuesday, you keep them there until the crisis subsides.

Yesterday, I received a briefing from USAID reporting that part of your Administration's response was to provide \$50,000 in disaster response efforts, \$40,000 to Catholic Relief Services to purchase and distribute emergency non-food relief supplies, and at most, \$10,000 for fuel for the Haitian government's Ministry of Public Works. This is a pittance and wholly inadequate to properly respond to one of the worst natural disasters in Caribbean history. I further request that you increase the amount of emergency funding allocated to Haiti.

As the desperate conditions in Haiti become nearly insurmountable, I implore you to both order American troops to continue their crucial role in the humanitarian relief effort and provide greater emergency assistance funding. Such American involvement will help promote democracy and stability, thereby reducing the possibility of illegal immigration and risk-taking as Haitians take to the seas to reach the United States.

Many thanks for your consideration. If my staff or I can be of assistance, please do not hesitate to call on us. I look forward to your prompt reply to this urgent matter.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Kendrick B. Meek", written in a cursive style.

KENDRICK B. MEEK  
Member of Congress